ALASKAN TOKEN COLLECTOR
& POLAR NUMISMATIST VOLUME XLI, NO. 3, MARCH, 2019.

ALASKA RARE COINS, P.O. BOX 72832, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99707 Phone 907 452-6461 email: akcoins@mosquitonet.com

See page 29

COMMUTATION TICKET:

definition: a ticket good for several trips or to attend a season of entertainment at a reduced rate.

The commutation tickets that we see are for meals. Some actually state "Commutation Ticket," while other may say "Meal Ticket," and others just give the name of the business. A discount was usually extended because these were pre-paid. The modern version of these are the coffee punch cards. Most are not pre-paid, but give the bearer a free coffee after the purchase of a set number.

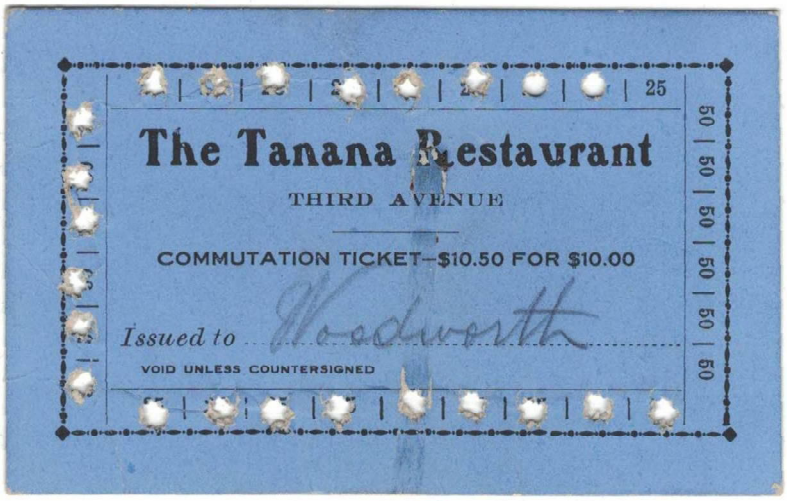
Dawson, Y.T. (see August, 2001).

Over the years, we have presented quite a number of these. Like the cardboard tokens that we examined in the last issue, these punch card tokens do not enjoy the popularity of metal trade tokens. But these are also money substitutes. The business enticed the customer to part with his cash (or gold or perhaps tokens from other businesses) in return for a discount on future meals.

There are other pre-paid punch card meal tickets that do not bear the term "commutation ticket." These likely received a discount, but it is not stated. If there were no discount, what would be the point?

The King Street Dining Parlor is signed by Mrs. Dodson. There was a Mrs. Elizabeth Dodson in Dawson from at least 1901 to 1905.

Another commutation ticket is from the Tanana Restaurant. It was issued to Woodworth. All but one Woodworth in the directories are in Dawson, the odd man out in Deering. So while there are Tanana bars, cafes, saloons, hotels etc. all over the state, this pretty much locks this down as being from Dawson. Connected with the Tanana Hotel?



(continued on page 23)

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Commutation tickets and meal tickets are a money substitute that gets overlooked by most. They are purchased in advance for future use, usually at a discount. They do not change hands like tokens, but reside in the owners wallet or pocket, to get another hole punched when a meal is purchased.

Our article on commutation tickets leads us to a new feature. This month we introduce ***The Token Tells a Tale!*** While searching newspapers on the Library of Congress website, I have found some fascinating, and sometimes gruesome, stories about token issuers or those connected to them. The Library of Congress provides searchable newspapers at:

chronicalingamerica.loc.gov.

The less common the name, the more likely you will not be overwhelmed. Find your favorite token and research the issuer! Try the advanced search!

Our thanks this month to David Phillips for presenting a previously unknown Yukon wooden nickel. New discoveries in this collecting area are far and few between. Wood, like paper, is not appreciated and likely to be thrown away. Fortunately this has not happened with this wooden token.

We were fortunate to sell a few tokens on eBay at prices that surpassed our expectations, in particular two tokens from Fairbanks: International Hotel 25¢, B-29a - $835; and College Bus, B-T3a - $690. Check out the prices realized in the right column for other eBay sales.

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PRICES REALIZED

Selected prices realized from eBay:

Anchorage, Morris for Rep, encased cent	86.00
Chatanika, Bingle Fritz, $1, B-1c	33.00
Delta Jct., Diehl's, FST stet	65.00OB
Fairbanks, Idle Hour Club, 10¢, B-27b	200.00OB
Fairbanks, International Hotel, 25¢, B-29b	835.00
Fairbanks, Mrs. Priess' Bakery, 1 lf, B-47a	500.00OB
Fairbanks, D. Ryan, no denom. B-51a	OB150.00NB
Fairbanks, College Bus, 12½¢, B-T3a	690.00
Juneau, Buford's Corner, 50¢, B-12c	15.00OB
Juneau, NY Exchange, 6½¢, B-53bII	16.25
Kasigluk, Co-Op Store, 25¢ FST	9.99OB
Ketchikan, (2) Bingle Club, 12½¢, B-5.2 a and b	26.55

Ketchikan, Blue Fox Pup, 50¢, "F", B-6d	11.05
Ketchikan, Blue Fox Pup, $1, B-6e	9.00
Palmer, ARRC, 1¢, B-1a	46.00
Palmer, ARRC, 5¢, B-1b	51.00
Palmer, PCC (prison) 10	8.51
Petersburg, Hack's, 5¢, B-3a	132.50
Seward, Northern, 12½¢, B-8bII, NGC-62	71.00
Sitka, Baranof Bus, one fare, B-T2a	12.00OB
Skagway, Board of Trade, 12½¢, B-4d	102.50
Skagway, Mascotte Saloon, 5¢, b-17a	153.51
Soldotna, Wye Taxi, 10¢, b-T3a	6.00OB
Sparrevhon, 719th ACW, 5¢, B-1b	26.70
Tonsina, Jake Nafsted, 12½¢, B-1a	80.75
Valdez, CBB, 12½¢, B-4b, NGC-AU53	**58.91**
Wildwood, WCC (prison) 25	25.00OB
Dawson, YT, H & P, 2 Bits, B-13a, holed	56.00
(Maverick), Yukon Dogs, 5¢	18.51

OB =Opening Bid; NB = No Bid; RL = relist; R = Reserve; RNM = Reserve Not Met; W = withdrawn BIN = Buy it now; BOA = Best Offer Accepted; DNS = Did Not Sell; FTR = see For the Record.

BOUND VOLUMES 31-40

The newsletters have been sent to the binder and we hope that they will be delivered by mid-March. Those who confirmed that they wanted a copy will receive them directly from the binder.

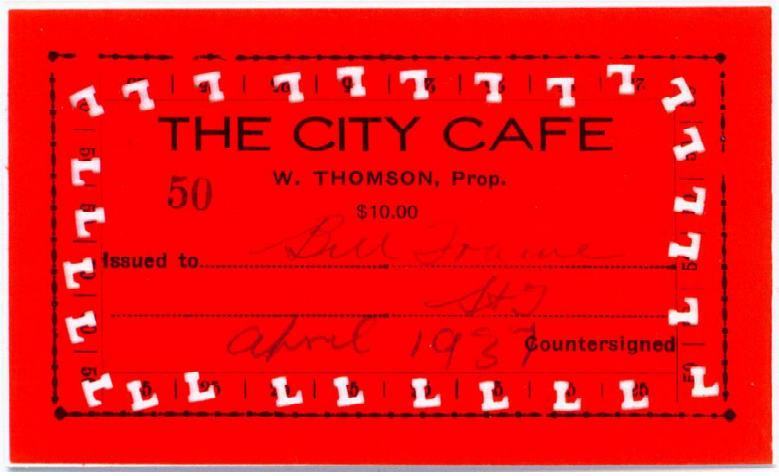
We have three bound in navy blue buckram available at $250 each. If you want one, please contact us.

COMMUNTATION TICKETS, CONT.

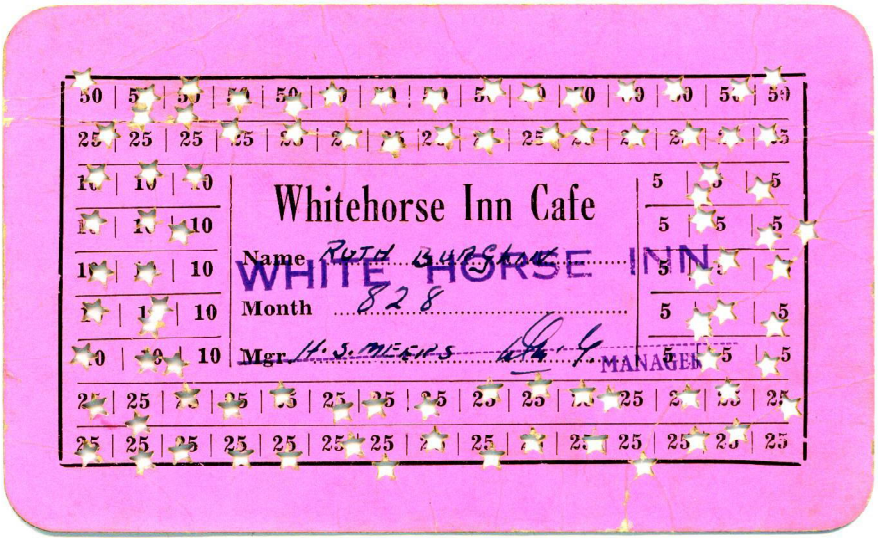
The only Hilbert in the directories is James Hilbert, listed as being in Dawson in 1901 and 1902.

Edward J. McCormick is shown as owning a restaurant in 1901 and 1903. There are also Emmitt, John, and Robert McCormick shown as waiters. A family business?

Black on green, 110mm x 57mm.



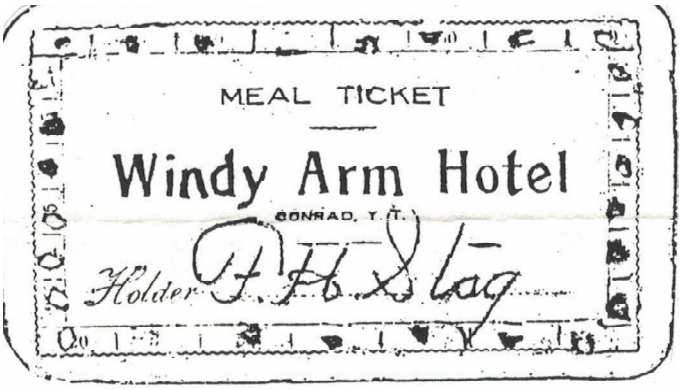
Jim Robb attributes the City Cafe to Dawson. Signed by W. Thomson and dated April, 1937. (January 2008, page 4).



This Whitehorse Inn Cafe over-stamped White Horse Inn is the largest and most punched out we have seen!

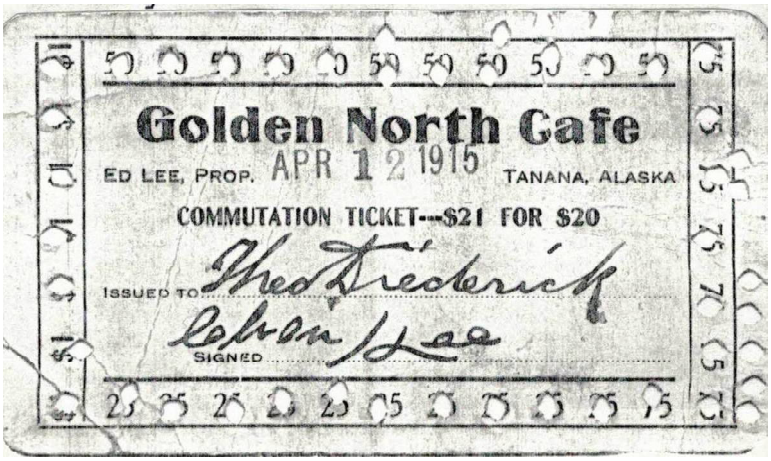
Black on pink with a blue over-stamp. 114mm by 70mm.

COMMUNTATION TICKETS, CONT.



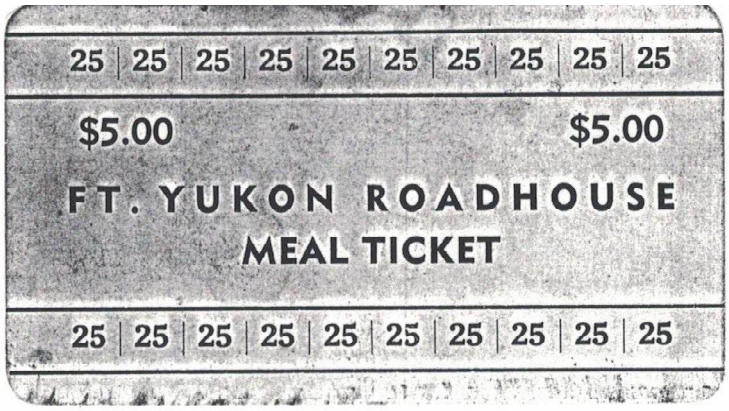
Conrad is a mining ghost town on Windy Arm of Tagish Lake.

(March 1989, pages 13 and 16).



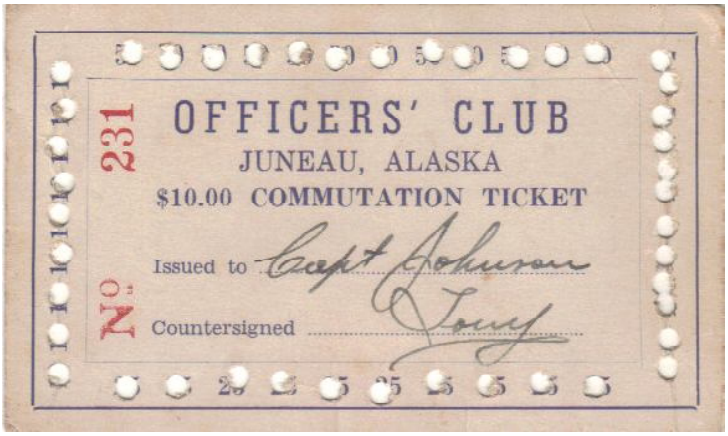
The Golden North Cafe leaves no doubt as to its attribution, issued in Tanana, Alaska in 1915. Two varieties were reported in the March 1991 issue: black on yellow and black on gray (or faded blue), 103mm by 59mm.

In the July 23, 1936 issue of the Matanuska Valley Pioneer is an ad for The Palmer Cafe. In this ad, they offer $10 meal tickets for $9.50.



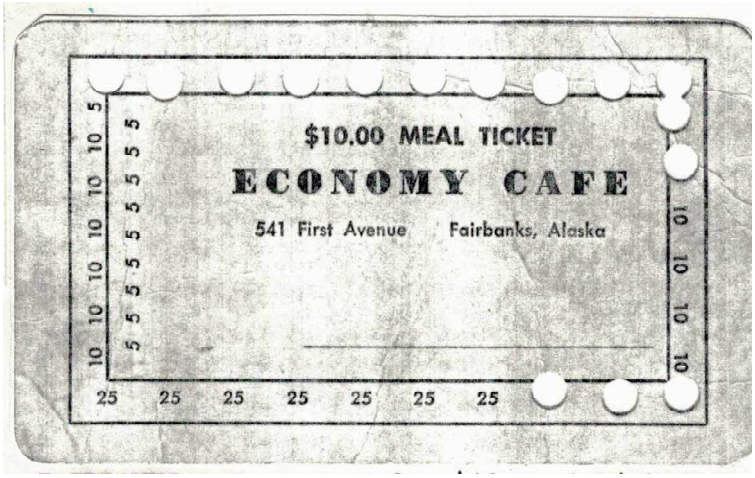
Ft. Yukon Roadhouse $5 meal ticket. No indication of date.

Black on pink, 95mm by 54mm.

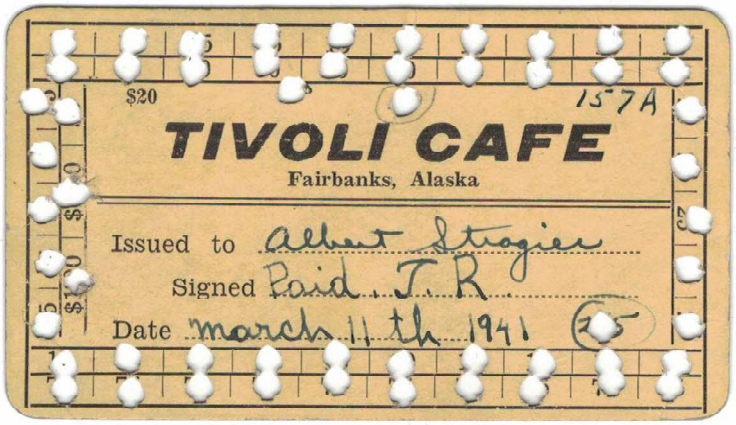


Even the military got into the act of using commutation tickets. This one was for the Officers' Club in Juneau, presumably during World War II. Black on pink, size not reported.

COMMUNTATION TICKETS, CONT.



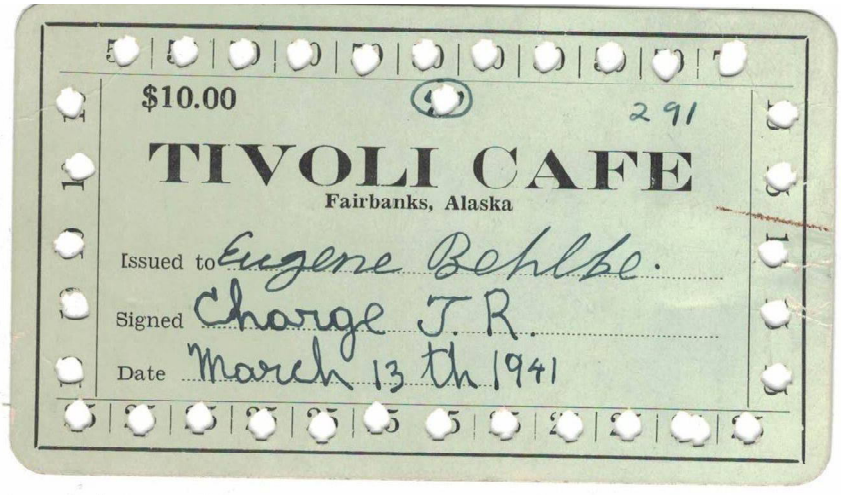
Undated and unsigned, the only information we have here is the business name and location in Fairbanks. Black on yellow, 98mm by 58mm.



Tivoli Cafe had two punch cards both dated 1941:

$20, black on yellow, 95mm by 55mm).

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported on Feb 19, 1938 that Southall Pfund won a meal ticket at the Pioneer Grill by calculating the number of beans in a jar!



$10, black on pale green, 118mm by 63mm.

And there is one more - which leads us to...

COMMUNTATION TICKETS, CONT.

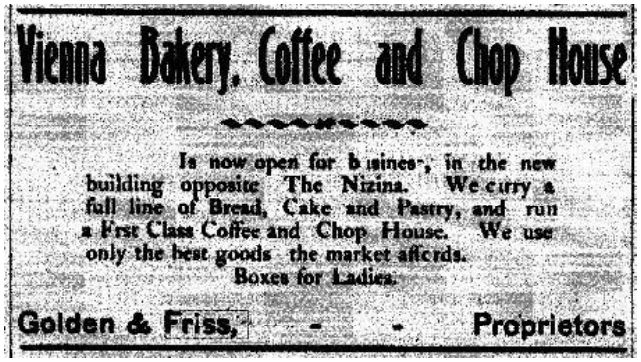
A drum roll, please...to be read with a deep TV announcer's voice...

THE TOKEN TELLS A TALE

Finally, Friss' Coffee House of Fairbanks, dated 1937. Black on tan, 98mm by 58mm.

But what is the "back story?"

Bernard Friss was in business in Valdez in 1902 with Frank J. Golden running the Vienna Bakery, Coffee and Chop House. The ad (below) says "Is now open for business. (Dec. 11, 1902, The Alaska Prospector - Valdez). Perhaps an opening announcement or just a move to a new location.


Vienna Bakery, Coffee and Chop House

Is now open for business, in the new building opposite The Nizina. We carry a full line of Bread, Cake and Pastry, and run a First Class Coffee and Chop House. We use only the best goods the market affords.
Boxes for Ladies.

Golden & Friss, - - Proprietors

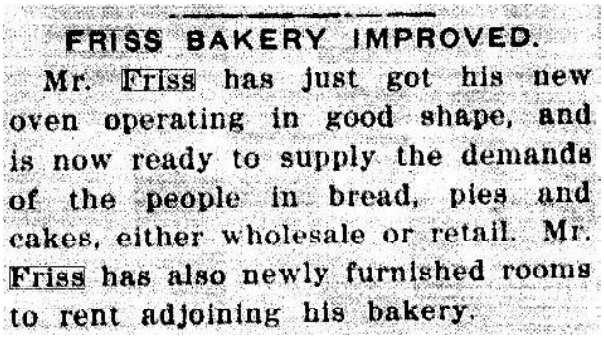
But on December 25, 1902 there is a notice of "Dissolution of Partnership" in the same paper, Golden retaining ownership.

But less than two months later, Friss is in business with William Hatch in The Creamery restaurant (Feb. 12, 1903).

But, Frank Golden did not last long in business, with a "Notice of Marshall's Sale" on February 19, 1903. Seems like Bernard baled out just in time.

By November 2, 1905, Bernard Friss is in Fairbanks, and there is announcement of the birth of his baby girl in September (The Alaska Prospector - Valdez). She is important later in this story.

In the August 22, 1910 issue of the Alaska Citizen (Fairbanks), he takes out two mortgages with R.C. Wood. Seems like he is getting established.


FRISS BAKERY IMPROVED.

Mr. Friss has just got his new oven operating in good shape, and is now ready to supply the demands of the people in bread, pies and cakes, either wholesale or retail. Mr. Friss has also newly furnished rooms to rent adjoining his bakery.

On September 9, 1912, there is an announcement in the Alaska Citizen that "The Friss hotel barber shop is now in its new quarters opposite the Fairview hotel."

By July 20, 1914 (the Alaska Citizen), Friss has upgraded his bakery (what happened to the barber shop?) Ads run on nearly a daily basis (next page).

The first indication of troubles in paradise: on April 19, 1915, it is reported that "Mrs. Bernard Friss, wife of the local restaurant proprietor, was taken to St. Joseph's hospital yesterday, but it was explained last night that her condition is not serious." (Alaska Citizen). Two months later:

THE TOKEN TELLS A TALE, cont.

Friss Beats Wife, Gets Sixty Days

"Bernard Friss, the Front street baker, was given 60 days in the federal jail by Commissioner John K. Brown Saturday, on the charge of wife beating. He first entered a plea of guilty to the crime charged, changing his plea from that entered when he was first arraigned. Asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed upon him, Friss stated that although he had pleaded guilty, he was not guilty, and that he had never hit a woman in his life. The court made no comment when passing sentence.

"Reliable witnesses are authority for the statement, however, that Friss has practiced wife beating for a number of years. He was arrested Saturday night by Chief of Police Wiseman, who swore to the complaint in the case. The wife refused to make a complaint in the matter, as she has always done, but the little child of the couple, a girl ten years of age, told the chief that her father had been beating her mother and she wanted her mother protected, adding that she would tell the judge about it herself.

"Chief Wiseman says that Mrs. Friss presented a very battered appearance when he saw her Saturday night when she was taken to the hospital." (Alaska Citizen, June 19, 1916).

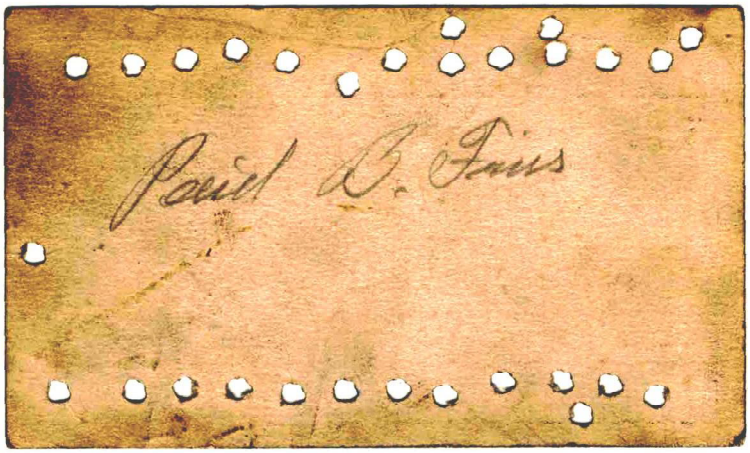
A Fairbanks citizen is not pleased with Mr. Friss, or Commissioner Brown (below, left).

• • •

FRISS beat his wife up so badly that she had to be taken to the hospital for treatment. For this little act of indiscretion Judge Brown gave him sixty days in the chamber of reflection. A wife-beater should be given a year at least, and a judge who is as soft-hearted (or headed) as Judge Brown should be made to serve out half the sentence. Neither of them are any good to the community.

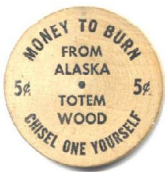
Alaska Citizen, June 19, 1916

Nothing further was found about Bernard Friss. He was still in business in Fairbanks when this card was issued as it is signed on the front "Bernard Friss" and on the back "Paid B. Friss."



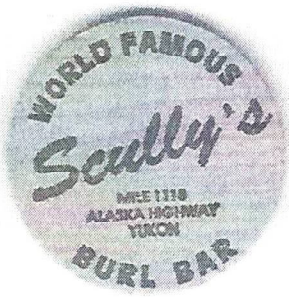
Information for this new series of...trivia is found on chronicalingamerica.loc.gov, an on-line resource of historic American newspapers.

Money To Burn



by David Phillips

SCULLY'S SALOON



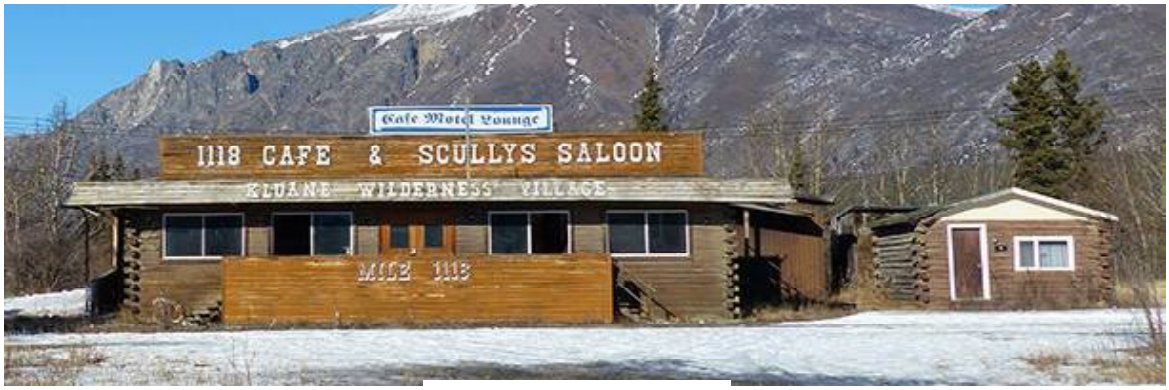
A Scully's wood turned up recently, which fact has resulted in a search for its origin, and any facts about it.

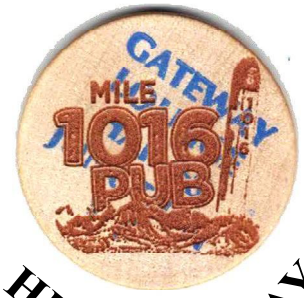
Turns out it is from Scully's Saloon, also known as Scully's World Famous Burl Bar, located at Mile 1118 of the Alaska Highway in Yukon, next door to the Kluane Wilderness Village and R.V Park.

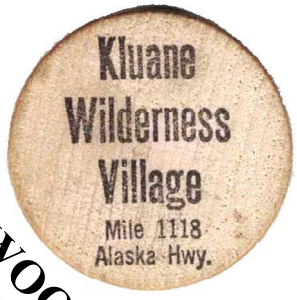
Unfortunately, the Kluane Wilderness Village closed its operation in 2006, and Scully's Saloon closed soon thereafter in 2007.

The owner of Scully's was actually Gordon Scullun, a 30 year veteran of life in the Yukon. After the saloon closed, Scully retired to Prince George, BC (at the age of 85!). He lives in a cabin next to his sister Freda and brother-in-law George. Gordon was also well known for the production of his beautiful burl wood piece.

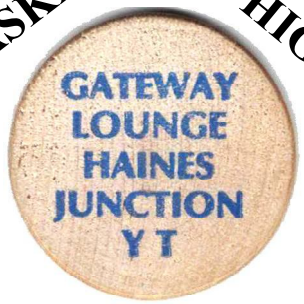
Few of these woods have surfaced, and nothing is known of the numbers made, nor the years they were used. All woods collectors must be on the watch for any that do show up.

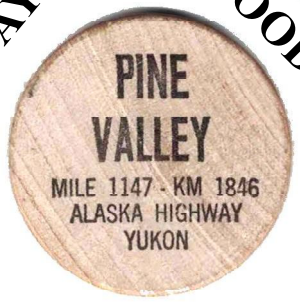






ALASKA HIGH WAY WOODS





Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, August 23, 1951

From *"Buzzard's Myth: Adventures of a Free Spirit from Egg to Infinity"* Alva Harris, 2012.

On the outskirts of town was a familiar landmark that we both had visited last summer. A World War II twin-engine bomber was parked lengthways beside the highway, seemingly ready to take off, but with an elaborate stairway attached to the midsection. A big neon sign above the hull proclaimed "Squadron Club, Welcome." Charles Noble, John Phelps, and I went there one night last summer. To get in you had to buy five dollars' worth of tickets. That did not mean I could dance fifty times at one ticket each. The dance hall girls talked their dancing partners out of as many tickets as they could for each five-minute dance. At the end of the night, the girls split their accumulated tickets fifty-fifty with the club and earned their daily wage. They were all young and pretty, hired based on their abilities to arouse a man's desires. I danced with the same girl five times, and my five dollars were gone.

"Ma'am," I asked, "what's your name?"

"Kelly. What's yours?" Kelly replied, and continued, "That's the first time I've been called ma'am since leaving Texas six months ago. Thank you." Her response to my address was almost identical to that of another lady several years earlier during a similar scenario.

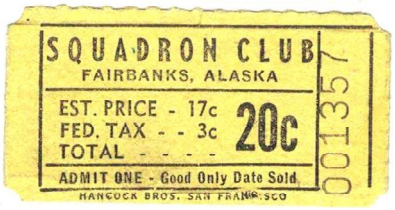
"Alva," I answered, "and you're the first ma'am I've held in six months. You are a fine-feeling ma'am. How old are you, ma'am?"

"I'm eighteen," she firmly stated, but I didn't believe it. I guessed seventeen at most, but what did it matter? She was a professional, there for a purpose, and I was part of that purpose.

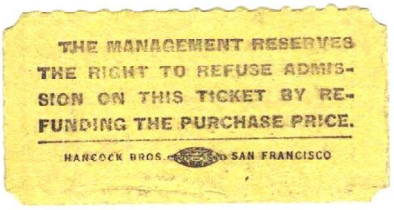
I knew other activities other than dancing took place at the Squadron Club, or I would not have been there. In one corner, a blackjack game was being run by the house. A long bar covered one wall and was spotted with railroad workers and men from the mining camps. A stairway climbed to a balcony that had a row of doors facing the dance hall below it. It reminded me of a Western movie set. Occasionally, a dance hall girl would disappear into one of those rooms with a dime-a-dance partner in tow. I sat down beside Kelly during a two-minute break between the five-minute dances. She knew that I had no more tickets, but was happy and exciting to talk to. She knew she had me hooked.

"Ma'am, how many tickets will it cost me to follow you up those stairs?" I asked.

"Only 100. Tonight is slow, and it will be worth your while." She smiled and kissed me.



Federal Tax ???



From the Anchorage Daily News, September 10, 2014, by Michael Carey.

...dingy shacks clustered along the edge of town that billed themselves The Club 69, The Club Morocco, The Kasbah, and The Club Zanzibar or in Fairbanks' architectural marvel, The Squadron Club -- a hastily constructed, frame building attached to the fuselage of a C-46 aircraft.

JOE GANDOLFO

From *Gamblers and Dreamers* by Charlene Porsild, UBC Press, 1998.

Later Dawson mercantile operations varied in size from small speciality stores to more established general merchants. Joseph Gandolfo, for example, was a well-known fruit and candy merchant formerly of the Cripple Creek gold camp in Colorado. Gandolfo was a naturalized American of Italian birth. He had arrived in Dawson in 1898 when he was fifty-two years old, and he was joined by his wife the following year and by his younger brother Alexander in 1901. The Gandolfo family did well in Dawson, where in 1898 their 'first shipment of eight tons of oranges, lemons, bananas and cucumbers arrived in an untouched market at $1 apiece.' In a city where people were dying of scurvy every winter, the family had cornered a highly lucrative market. Running a business, however, was not cheap: Joseph Gandolfo reportedly paid $120 per month to rent five feet of street frontage for his shop in 1898.

Despite high costs of overhead, enterprising merchants who managed to establish themselves early in the marketplace often realized very healthy profits. The Gandolfos became prosperous and prominent, remaining in Dawson for a number of years after the rush. Active in the Roman Catholic church and regular contributors to a number of local charities, they invested their profits well and managed to maintain a very comfortable life style. According to the census, by 1901, Joseph and Josephine Gandolfo owned $15,000 worth of real estate, $8,000 worth of mining claims, and $10,200 in personal property. This was a tidy poke indeed.

FOR THE RECORD

CIRCLE CITY: Cooper & Eaton, 25¢, brass, 21mm, listed, B-2a, not illustrated (submitted by Ron Benice).

ELMENDORF AFB: Polar Bowl, Air Force Services, No Cash Value. CN or plated brass, 23mm, HM mint mark (Hoffman Mint) (submitted by Ron Benice).

NORTH POLE: North Pole High School, Class of 2010, Patriot Pride, 11 May 2010. White chip with blue inserts, black on white stickers in the center. 40mm.

PORTLOCK CITY: Alaska Consolidated Fisheries, Inc., 5¢ in trade, B-unlisted. Aluminum, presumably 21mm (submitted by J.W. Terrill).

KENSINGTON MINE/COEUR ALASKA: 2016, edgemarked .999 fine silver.
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